THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."—MATT. XXIV, 44.

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A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE MOST IMPORTANT LATTER-DAY VISITATIONS OF HEAVENLY BEINGS.

BY ELDER HERBERT L. JAMES.

I. Early in the spring of 1820, A vision of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ to Joseph Smith, Junior (then a young lad about 14 years of age), while he was praying in the woods near his home in Manchester, Ontario (now Wayne) County, State of New York. The following graphic description in his own words is taken from the "Pearl of Great Price," page 59:

"After I had retired into the place where I had previously designed to go, having looked around me and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God. I had scarcely done so, when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction. But exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction, not to an imaginary ruin, but to the power of some actual being from the unseen world, who had such a marvellous power as I had never before felt in any being. Just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually, until it fell upon me. It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me, I saw two personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name, and said (pointing to the other), THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, HEAR HIM.

"My object in going to enquire of the Lord, was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner, therefore, did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the

personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong), and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt. They draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doctrine the commandments of men, having the form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.

"He again forbade me to join with any of them; and many other things did he say unto me which I cannot write at this time. When I came to myself again, I found myself lying on my back, looking up into heaven."

II. September 21, 1823. An angel appeared to Joseph Smith, Junior, after he had retired to his bed for the night, and while praying to God for forgiveness of his sins and for some manifestation whereby he might know his state and standing before Him; having full confidence in obtaining a divine manifestation, as he had previously had one.

We quote again from the same work, page 62. "While I was thus in the act of calling upon God, I discovered a light appearing in the room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside, standing in the air, for his feet did not touch the floor. He had on a loose robe of most exquisite whiteness. It was a whiteness beyond anything earthly I had ever seen; nor do I believe that any earthly thing could be made to appear so exceedingly white and brilliant. His hands were naked, and his arms also, a little above the wrist; so also were his feet naked, as were his legs a little above the ankles. His head and neck were also bare. I could discover that he had no other clothing on but this robe, as it was open, so that I could see into his bosom.

"Not only was his robe exceedingly white, but his whole person was glorious beyond description, and his countenance truly like lightning. The room was exceedingly light, but not so very bright as immediately around his person. When I first looked upon him I was afraid, but the fear soon left me. He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni. That God had a work for me to do, and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues; or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people. He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this (American) continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fullness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants. Also, that there were two stones in silver bows (and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim,) deposited with the plates, and the possession and use of these stones was what constituted Seers in ancient or former times, and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book."

For a further account of this vision, (which was twice repeated before morning) and the words of the angel, see pp. 63, 64.

III. September 22, 1823. The same heavenly messenger again appeared to Joseph Smith as he was returning from his labors in the field, telling him to go and view the places, the existence of which had been made known to him, and the locality of which he had seen in vision the night before.

Repairing to the spot, which he at once recognized as being the same that he had seen in the vision, he was about to take the plates from the stone box or cell in which they were deposited, when the angel appeared again and forbade him to remove them, saying that the time for bringing them forth had not yet arrived, neither would arrive until four years from that time, but told him to visit the place again precisely in one year from that time, and that he would there meet with him, and he

was to continue to do so each year until the time should come for obtaining the plates. He obeyed these instructions, going on the same day each year to the place appointed, where he found the same holy messenger, and received instruction and intelligence from him at each interview respecting what the Lord was going to do, and how and in what manner His kingdom was to be conducted in the last days. (Ibid. pp. 65,66.)

IV. September 22, 1827. Four years from the day on which Joseph Smith first beheld the plates, the angel Moroni delivered them up to him, together with the Urim and Thummim and the Breastplate, with this charge, that he should be responsible for them; that if he should let them go carelessly or through any neglect, he should be cut off; but that if he would use all his endeavors to preserve them, until he, the messenger, should call for them, they should be protected. (Ibid p. 67.)

V. May 15, 1829. John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith, Junior, and Oliver Cowdery, while praying in the woods concerning baptism for the remission of sins, and conferred upon them the Aaronic Priesthood, laying his hands upon them and saying: Upon you, my fellow-servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the Gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness.

He told them that this Aaronic Priesthood had not the power of laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, but that this should be conferred upon them hereafter; and he commanded them to go and be baptized, giving them directions that Joseph Smith should baptize Oliver Cowdery first, and afterwards should be himself baptized by Oliver. (Ibid pp. 69, 70.)

VI. Between this date, May 15, 1829, and the [illegible] of the following month (June 1829), the exact day not being known, Peter, James and John, who held the keys of the Melchisedek Priesthood in a former dispensation, appeared to Joseph Smith, Junior, and Oliver Cowdery in the wilderness between Harmony, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, and Colesville, Broom County, in the State of New York, and ordained them to the Melchisedek Priesthood.

VII. April 3, 1836. The Savior, Moses, Elias and Elijah appeared to Joseph Smith, Junior, and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple, as recorded in section cx of the Doctrine and Covenants, which we give verbatim, as follows:

"The vail was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened.

We saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold in color like amber.

His eyes were as a flame of fire, the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying—

I am the first and the last, I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain, I am your advocate with the Father.

Behold, your sins are forgiven you, you are clean before me, therefore lift up your heads and rejoice.

Let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have, with their might, built this house to my name.

For behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here, and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house.

Yea, I will appear unto my servants and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house.

Yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house;

And the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing which

shall be poured out upon the heads of my people. Even so. Amen.

After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.

After this, Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying, that in us, and our seed, all generations after us should be blessed.

After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said—

Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he (Elijah) should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come,

To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse.

Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.

GOD AND LIFE.

From the Contributor.

MAN'S highest aspiration is eternal life, and eternal life is to *know* "the only true God." This eternal life or knowledge of God, it is written, is His great gift to man; consequently it is the most important consideration of human life to obtain this knowledge, and justifies us in making inquiry after the character of this only true God.

An idea of God, as the Creator, is found among all people, however degraded they may be; and this fact alone may be received as the true idea. If not true, whence did it come and obtain such prevalence? There must certainly be in man a peculiar adaptation for the divine to invent such an idea. This universal idea of God, however, is not always correct as to His character. The character of the true God is not demonstrated alone by the visible universe—the world of matter; is not discoverable from the light of nature alone. Hence in many ages paganism and idolatry have prevailed to an almost incredible extent. Gods of wood and stone, images of gold and silver, the sun, moon and stars, have had the worship of man's most divine nature. Even in a day when some recognized God as being manifest in the flesh, in the image and person of His Son, altars were erected and inscribed to the "unknown god"—a being esteemed as superior, but who was "ignorantly worshiped." This ignorant exercise of the divine sentiment of man's nature has been the means of diverting his worship from the true God to a great extent. Many have accepted false god theories, and some the no God theory, while a few in most ages have sought after and found an intelligent God—the Creator of all things, adapted to the full development of man's moral and spiritual nature—the true God.

Man is a creature of intelligence, possessing reasoning powers, and attributes that distinguish him from all other of the vast creations known. The exercise of these powers teach him, from his own standpoint, to seek after something superior to himself. That anything to be worthy of his worship and adoration, must be not only in harmony with his own nature, but possess to an infinite degree all that man has or possesses in a finite degree, that can or should seek perfection. Man's consciousness and powers of perception teach him without the light of revelation that he is only the creature, that there must be a creator, a cause, a more intelligent being than himself, the framer and designer, in whose image and likeness he was made, reflecting the character,

of the Creator—to him, Father—God. Man learns also by his powers of perception and from his surroundings, that while all things were made for him and apparently subject to him, that he is not the author nor creator of what he beholds and enjoys, but that the dominion he holds must have been given to him by another—a greater than himself.

These and many other like facts relating to his consciousness are sufficient to impress upon man the *idea* of God—a being of intelligence and power, to be venerated and adored as one from whom is derived directly or indirectly all that man can desire or enjoy. If the material world does not prove the existence of its Maker, the universe everywhere shows His handy work, and is everywhere full of the evidence of a divine intelligence and wisdom. In nature there is a wonderful adaptation for the support of life. Her movements are all in perfect order. Her elements, that might be fatal to life, are so modified as to be suited to the need of intelligent beings. Deleterious gases constantly mingling with the atmosphere are extracted by other influences, taken up and absorbed, and not only rendered harmless, but made a necessity to support life, when otherwise they would be fatal.

So, too, the human body, a mechanism "fearfully and wonderfully made," with its marvelous complications and wonderful adaptations, shows a conception so far above the human intellect that human reason is struck with awe and amazement, and life seems a mystery, except upon the theory of the existence of a God and an immortality.

Natural theology here comes to our aid, teaching us, through His creations, lessons indicating the perfect wisdom, the infinite intelligence and the wonderful adaptation of all His works and plans. The human mind discovers no mistakes in all this grand arrangement of the divine Maker. The material world is just suited to man's necessities and physical wants, and a knowledge of Him satisfies the wants of his moral nature. In God is found the grounds which justify a law binding on all minds, a standard of perfection toward which man may continually progress; the source of universal law, and a being to whom he is responsible, by whose commands he is firmly bound.

Life is our portion here; we cannot escape from it; and what this life shall be, every mind must answer under the most fearful responsibilities. Man in life develops the spiritual—the ideas and thoughts within him—according to his theory of life. If he adopt the no God theory, he must live on a level with, and die like the brute. If he adopt the true theory of a God, he may develop his immortal spirit day by day, and grow more in His image, until prepared for the communion of spirits. Which of these theories will the reader adopt? This is the most important question of life, and it must be answered. On the decision depends all of moral culture. If you do not recognize a God, you must form a code of duty, and live without Him. Your morality and life must be without God, a dark life indeed without the light of His Spirit and truth.

The idea of a world without a God is not consistent with man's consciousness of his own being, and all other created things. The great truth of a creating God forces itself upon the creature, and the soul of man responds to the divine impulse and involuntarily exclaims, "Our Father who art in heaven." This single idea of the infinite planted in the soul is a mighty power in producing purity of life, in restraining vice and in dispelling the darkness of atheism, so that in the light of a spiritual life man recognizes as far above him, "My Father and my God," as an ultimate fact.

Having arrived at this conclusion, and taken this for our standpoint, we may now reasonably ask what is the character of this being we call God? On this point many false theories have been introduced to the world, and many false gods have been worshiped. Recognizing the fact that there is a God is not sufficient. We must have a correct knowledge of His character, for it is eternal life to *know* God. We neither want paganism, pantheism, or modern skepticism, for

the simple reason that neither will admit a system of morality including the idea of obligation and duty. The true God, who is the creator of all things, must have the character of a ruler, of a governor of the universe and of His creations; and the law which He imposes upon them, and by which they are sustained, must necessarily reflect His true character. Whatever He creates must express the character of the Creator. It cannot be otherwise. As man, in his work, develops himself, his own thoughts, so the ideas and plans in the divine mind must be realized in His creations, to be the true exponent of Himself. Thereby is He a God of truth.

Man is *like* his Maker in more than his outward visible image; his spiritual, moral and intellectual endowments are all in harmony with the divine parentage. The attributes of his being are found to be truth, justice and mercy, all of which indicate his true origin—indicate that the spiritual or invisible is the great motive power of his nature. These lay the foundation for a moral structure, and his life, in unison with the idea of God, will develop the highest possible condition of moral excellence. It cannot be otherwise than that the work created should bear the impress of the creator; the child, of the parent; man, of God; as like produces like, answering an immutable law. Thence, in unison with this law, we find man spending his life in the exercise of his intellectual and mental powers; designing, planning and executing. These powers are the ruling, leading elements of his being. His physical powers only lend their aid in executing what has been designed—in using the instruments best calculated to aid in accomplishing the work.

Thus man, in his sphere of action, which is the earth and the elements, is found following in the wake of, and exercising similar powers to, the Great Architect of all created things, displaying skill and wonderful ingenuity in his conceptions and in the execution of these designs, which tend to organize, create, improve and increase in usefulness and excellence.

To secure and be entitled to the adoration and worship of man, God must possess all the attributes, qualities, powers and excellence, in their perfection, which can be desired by man, or that can contribute to his development, happiness and perfection. Only such a being could fill the requirements of man's consciousness, the demands of his nature.

In man is found all the attributes and qualities which he desires to find in God. What unmistakable evidence of his parentage, like begetting like, in conformity to the universal law! If man, the child, is an intelligent, organized being, then must the Father be also. Man, the child, possessing the attributes of justice, judgment, mercy and truth, the Father must necessarily possess them, and in their perfection. The child is found planning, devising and organizing the material elements by which his condition is improved. He is simply doing what the Father has done in a far superior manner. Man, the child, possesses a moral or spiritual nature in such complete harmony with that of the Father, as to render him capable of attaining to all the perfections and fullness of His nature and being. That the child may become fully developed and acquire the perfection of the Father, is the great object of his life. That object can never be realized only by acquiring a correct knowledge of God, His character and laws. Man must have faith in God, and seek after Him, to obtain this knowledge.

These are some of the facts which justify and force upon man the conclusion that there is a God, and we may reasonably inquire what He must be to fill the worship, supply the wants, and provide for all the demands, both present and prospective, of common humanity. What might be required by the spirits of just men already made perfect, is beyond the purpose of our present inquiry.

God must be a being of intelligence and power, possessing all the attributes in their perfection which belong to man, otherwise man could not recognise Him as one necessary to the development and perfection of humanity. Man as an intelligent being

has power to plan, organize and create, and God must possess like powers to an infinite degree, and of whom it may truly be said that, "all things were created by Him, and without Him there was not any thing made that was made." This infinite power to create implies also power to preserve, uphold and imbue with infinitude the creations made, otherwise His works would be in vain, and the created would not truthfully represent the creator. This God, as an intelligent being, must be not only omnipotent but omnipresent, by such means and power as will enable all other intelligence, in all places, to seek after Him and find Him. Otherwise He could not be God to *all*. He must have power to covenant and keep covenant with all other intelligent beings who, by virtue of their agency and choice, might accept the conditions of covenant; one who would swear by Himself because of no one greater to swear by. He must comprehend man in all his power and possibilities, or He would not be able to provide for him. He, the first great cause, and all else the result of the operations of that cause. In such a Being it is easy to discover all the power and excellence necessary to the ultimate perfection of humanity, and in all sincerity such a one may be relied upon as the TRUE GOD.

Such a God of intelligence and infinite power, the one operating in harmony with the other, is to man all that he can desire. His inmost soul can cherish no higher aspiration than to be like Him. The laws framed by that intelligence not only create well but govern well. To learn and obey those laws constitute the duty of man. They preserve order and harmony, grandeur and beauty in the material universe, and as fully provide for the happiness and moral excellence of man's spiritual nature to its full development and perfection. It is reasonable, therefore, to conclude that a God to man can be no less than an organized being like him, capable of perfectly comprehending him, in order to fully provide for his perfection. He must be an intelligent being to be the creator of intelligent creatures. His knowledge must be infinite, an essential attribute to His character as the moral governor of His universe. In this divine personality, endowed with omnipotence, infinite intelligence, justice, mercy and goodness, we find a foundation or stand-point for a science of morality involving obligation.

He has made us among the many creations, and over all has extended His laws, obedience to which in the material world is the source of all order and harmony, and obedience to which in the intellectual and moral world, would secure happiness to all rational creatures. These laws of our moral and intellectual being are above us and all humanity; they are obligatory upon all without exception, and here is a bond of union for humanity. We owe a common allegiance to the divine law, to the divine Governor. We are held responsible for our conduct, and must answer for every thought, word and act of our lives. Evidence of the adaptation of God's law to universal humanity may be found in the commission given to the Apostles—"Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the Gospel to *every creature*." Of the nature of that law it is written, the law of God is *perfect*, converting the *soul*; the law being perfect brings perfection to all who keep it. As no law originating with humanity promises this perfection, it is not only safe but consistent that man should seek to learn the higher law by which he may know God and thereby obtain an eternal life.

S. W. RICHARDS.

Parents often do and say things in the sight and hearing of little children which they would be ashamed of in the presence of older persons. Every outburst of temper, every peevish or fretful word, is photographed upon the mental constitution of the child, never to be effaced, though after-training may modify the impression. Whatever we wish our children to become we must ourselves be; for whether we will it or not, our every-day actions are our baby's teachers.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

MONDAY, JULY 13, 1885.

THEY LOVE DARKNESS RATHER THAN LIGHT.

In the early experience of a Latter-day Saint, nothing is more unaccountable than the apathy and indifference of the world to the plain and sound principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, an indifference which is occasionally varied by a bitter and unreasoning opposition to them.

When we yield an obedience to the first principles of the Gospel, and receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, the feeling we experience is one of inexpressible joy. The thralldom of sin is thrown off, the baptism of the spirit follows the baptism of water, the testimony of the Holy Ghost is received, and love and joy and peace fill the heart. The full force and significance of the Savior's words to Nicodemus, relative to the new birth, are perfectly understood, and we see the kingdom of God for the first time and rejoice in the knowledge that we are members thereof.

This feeling of happiness is accompanied with an earnest desire that others may share in the blessings received, for among the fruits of the spirit is a sincere love for our fellow creatures. With joy and enthusiasm we explain to our relatives and friends, as well as we can, the wondrous light that has shone on our minds, the peace and happiness which inspire our bosoms, and wish that we had the tongues of angels that we might more perfectly portray the glories of the kingdom of God that have opened up to our view. To our minds there is such a simplicity and beauty and harmony in the principles of the Gospel, and the blessings resulting from obedience thereto are so immediate and glorious, that we think they are only to be mentioned to be appreciated, and explained to be received. In this we soon find ourselves mistaken. Our testimony is almost universally met with a most profound indifference, or awakens a very active antagonism. Our well meant efforts to enlighten our fellow creatures are met with suspicion and contempt, and we awake to a knowledge of the terrible power and influence of the Evil One, who operates upon the children of men to induce them to reject and oppose the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

All this is very strange to us. To see men so anxious to enter into anything that promises an increased degree of enjoyment and prosperity in their temporal affairs; to see them toil and exert every faculty of mind and body to obtain a little wealth that perishes with the using, or a little transitory fame that will scarcely accompany them to the grave, and yet refuse that which will bring them not only unspeakable joy in this world, but eternal riches and

eternal happiness in the life to come, is an inconsistency that is hard to reconcile with the judgment and intelligence with which God has endowed humanity.

"If not so frequent, would not this be strange?
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still."

All who have had this experience, and we think it is more or less common to all the Latter-day Saints, can readily understand the feelings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, who, when he had received a glorious vision, hastened to inform his friends and acquaintances of the happy event. With what enthusiasm he proclaimed to mankind the important truth that God lived, for he had seen Him! and that Jesus was really the Christ and the Son of the true and living God, for the Father had acknowledged Him. Here was a living witness of the most important truths that concerned mankind, and which for ages had been but matters of sacred tradition. No wonder that Joseph was surprised at the reception he met with. Had he with equal fervor proclaimed that there was no God, and that revelation was all a myth, he certainly would have met with no worse reception, and in all probability would have been treated with greater toleration. And this from professedly Christian people! What inconsistency!

Thus we see that the opposition of the world to the pure and sound doctrines of the Gospel is not the result of a careful examination of, and an honest dissent from them, but an unreasoning hatred and blind antagonism. Neither is it because the religious element is wanting in mankind, for we see a very great number of faiths and beliefs, each numbering its devotees by hundreds, or thousands, or millions. These various forms of worship are the perverted expressions of that natural instinct implanted in the human bosom, which reaches out after the infinite and yearns for the knowledge of God. When we examine these systems, we find them unsatisfying to the soul, curious compounds of the ideas and notions and vagaries of man blended with principles of eternal truth, which have been revealed from heaven in former ages of the world for the salvation of the human family, and of which a record is preserved in the scriptures.

Is it not strange that mankind will think so much of the shadow and reject the substance, that they will hug to their bosoms the counterfeit and oppose the original? Are we actually living in the days, foretold by the Prophet Isaiah, when darkness should cover the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people? Do people love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil? It really seems that such are the characteristics of the age in which we live. When we compare the Gospel of Jesus Christ and its gifts and blessings and powers, with the weak and powerless forms of religion, now so popular in the world, we are surprised that mankind can be satisfied with such poor imitations, and our surprise is increased when we see them cleave to their man-made systems, even when the greater light comes and the Gospel in its ancient power and fullness is offered them.

And yet we need not be surprised at these things. Satan was always successful in blinding the eyes of the great majority of mankind to the truths of heaven, and in leading them from the ways of the Lord, and the prophets have told us he would exert the same power in the last days. The Apostle

Paul told Timothy that in the last days men would have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. He also told him that the time would come when men would not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts should they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. "And they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables."

Thus, in the strange perversity of mankind in refusing to accept the sound doctrines of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and in their obstinacy in turning away their ears from the truth, we see a fulfillment of the prophecies of the servants of God, who looked down the vista of time and discerned the spiritual darkness that should prevail in the last days and precede the coming of the Son of Man and the end of the world. G. O.

THE FOURTH OF JULY.

TAKE the four bank holidays of England, add to them ten or a dozen inferior ones, and condense the whole into one grand holiday, and as the result would be to the English, so is the Fourth of July, or the Glorious Fourth, or Independence day, as it is variously called, to the Americans. It is the day of days, the holiday of holidays. Metaphorically speaking, on this occasion the whole stock of American patriotism is collected and tumbled into a huge caldron, a big fire is kindled under it, fed by the fuel of eloquence, sometimes elegant, but always intense and largely interspersed with superlative adjectives, until the contents of the pot simmer and seethe and bubble and finally boil over. Oftentimes other heating materials of a more dubious nature than eloquence go to make up the patriotic fire, for America is not one whit behind other civilized nations in the social heresy that one cannot consistently keep a first-class holiday and a sober brain on the same day. Political and other antipathies are buried for the time, and on every hand are heard glorifications of the "greatest nation under the sun," "the Star-spangled Banner," and "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

As gunpowder played a very prominent part in the attainment of American Independence, so does it enter largely into the elements of its celebration and always with the same results, though on an infinitely smaller scale, and the national record of every celebration has its chapter of casualties to life and limb, and conflagrations that had their origin in the boys' fire crackers.

The reminiscences of the day, from an English standpoint, are not so exhilirating as from the American point of observation. The oppression exercised by the mother country to her American colonies is now generally regarded as a huge national mistake, which cost England the brightest jewel in her colonial crown. But this loss was not wholly a misfortune to England, for it suggested a policy of justice and liberality to her other colonies that has made their bands of union with her, stronger than bands of steel. Like an unnatural mother, England, by her harshness and cruelty, drove her American offspring from beneath the sheltering roof of her sovereignty, but chastened and made wise by the result, she lavished the favors of her love upon her remaining offspring, who have repaid her with an unfaltering, filial devotion.

In the course of the writer's life, he has had the privilege of reading the interesting story of the American Revolution in two ways. As an English school boy, he read in his orthodox history of the unwarrantable impudence of the "continental rebels," who dared to think an English king and parliament could do any wrong, and who were fool-hardy enough to measure arms in deadly strife with the leading power of the world; and then came the details of battle after battle, in which the Americans were nearly always beaten with immense loss, until it seemed that there would not be a rebel left alive upon the whole continent. This, of course, an English boy could readily understand, but the sequel was a puzzle. If the Americans were nearly always defeated, how came it that they obtained their independence?

A few years after, in a large American city, the writer read the story again. It was told in pretty much the same style, with the trifling difference that it was the English and Hessians who were nearly always beaten, and then the wonder arose how it was that the English held out so long! The story is told with more impartiality now, for time gradually softens the asperities of national animosities.

But better than all, we have the privilege of studying these great events in the light of ancient and modern revelations. By it we learn that greater and more powerful agencies were at work in that struggle for human freedom, than English pride and American resolution. The war of American Independence was as much a part of the divine plan as the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, or the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. It was an essential part of that mighty historical panorama that Daniel pictured forth in his prophetic interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. It was the great preliminary step to the establishment of God's kingdom upon the earth in the last days. It consecrated to religious freedom one spot of this fair earth, and planted the tree of liberty, beneath whose sheltering branches the kingdom of God was destined to make its humble beginning. By its means a Constitution was given, in which the inspiration of God assisted the wisdom of man in bringing forth the most perfect form of human government ever yet devised.

No people celebrate this day with greater heartiness than the Latter-day Saints in Utah, as none have greater cause to honor and cherish its associations and memories; and it is in their peaceful villages that the celebration is best conducted according to the spirit and influences that gave birth to the great event itself. There may be no booming of cannon, nor splendor of fireworks, nor the opening of bottles of wine and other strong drink, but the Spirit of God is there, and wells up in the hearts of the people who have suffered enough from the thralldom of tyranny to properly appreciate the blessings of liberty, and who, while honoring the day, honor still more the God of heaven who gave it.

We will also venture to say, that of the thousands in Utah who celebrated the day, there was not one loyal heart but that warmed to the noble little band of heroes who spent the day within prison walls because they honored God more than man, and dared to maintain their Constitutional rights. The fathers of American freedom pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honors to the great cause of civil and religious liberty, and the sons imprison men because they act upon that liberty and dare to worship God according to the

dictates of their consciences. Did the orators of Independence day think of this incongruity? If so, it must have been to their oratory as dead flies to the ointment.

G. O.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Brotton, Yorkshire, June 20, 1885.

President D. H. Wells.

Dear Brother,—I beg to forward you a few lines with respect to the work of the Lord in Cleveland, and the labors of my brethren in this their first round in our District since our out-door work commenced, which I hope may be of interest to your numerous readers, and productive of good to the Church.

On Tuesday evening, the 9th inst., we were favored with a visit by Elders Thomas Butterfield and Robert Marshall, of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Conference, whose presence we have much enjoyed during their stay with us.

On Thursday, the 11th, they, in company with myself and a few of the brethren, held an out-door meeting at the Cross, in the centre of the town of Skelton, collecting a congregation as we moved along High-street. I opened the meeting, and led out with an address on the fall of man, and the provision made by the Almighty for his redemption. Elder Marshall followed with an able address on the first principles of the Gospel—faith, repentance and baptism, and Elder Butterfield addressed the meeting on the divine authority of the holy Priesthood, and bore an able testimony to the sacred calling of the Prophets Joseph, Brigham and President Taylor. At 8:30 p.m., we closed the meeting, when immediately Mr. W. Fowler, a local preacher with the Primitive Methodists, stepped up and wished to know how we, the "Mormons," came by divine authority any more than did other Christian ministers. I promised him a full answer to his question on Sunday evening, the 18th inst., so we kindly thanked the audience and left the ground, but we were accompanied by upwards of one hundred persons along High-street, who gave us to know in their conversation with each other that they were well satisfied with what they had heard.

Friday, the 12th, we held an out-door meeting at Carlin Kow, and addressed about one hundred persons on the first principles of the Gospel. The non-professional Christians gave us a good hearing, and paid marked attention to all that was said; but the Ranters and Methodists of the village gathered themselves into a group in front of the speakers, and disturbed the meeting and the peaceable citizens present for over an hour.

Sunday, the 14th, we held an out-door service on the Key wall, at Brotton, at 10 a.m., and three short addresses were delivered to a respectable audience, who gave good attention throughout the service, and seemed to feel much interest in all that was said to them.

In the afternoon we held a Saints' meeting in Brother Cole's house, at Skinningrove, and preached on the sea wall at 6 p.m., to a small but respectable audience. As there was a Camp Meeting at Carlin Kow in the afternoon, and a Lovefeast in the Miners' Institute at 6 in the evening, at the Grove, this undoubtedly went against the gathering of our usually large congregation on the sea wall, and more especially as we had made no arrangement for the open-air meeting.

Tuesday, the 16th, we held our second open-air meeting at Carlin Kow, and delivered three discourses on the Gospel of Jesus Christ to about three hundred persons who had come to hear us. The Ranters and Methodists, as usual, gathered in great force to break up our meeting, so that every sentence which fell on their ears from the Priesthood was hailed with demoniac yells, and they thus continued annoying the brethren like raving maniacs until they had disgusted

every intelligent person on the ground.

Thursday, the 18th, at the Cross in Skelton, I opened the meeting with an address to about five hundred persons who had been summoned by the bellman, and who announced our intention to answer Mr. Fowler's questions as to the restoration of the everlasting Gospel, and the divine authority of the Holy Priesthood, which involved the entire salvation of the human family. Elder Marshall followed, addressed himself to the apostasy which succeeded the ministry of our Lord and Savior and His Apostles. It made a telling effect on the minds of all present, as it placed them on the horns of a dilemma—they must either accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ which we preached to them or perish. Elder Butterfield followed with a powerful testimony, which deeply impressed the audience, and I have no doubt is still with them to-day. We closed the meeting at 9 p.m., but neither Mr. Fowler, nor any member of his church of note, put in an appearance to defend him, so we thanked the audience for their kind attention, and left the Cross in company with hundreds of the congregation who accompanied us along High-street, freely talking to one and another on the subject of "Mormonism" and the Methodist churches.

In reviewing the general feelings of the people of this District, and I speak with over thirty years experience of them, I am fully satisfied that a great work will be done in Cleveland, but it may take some time to bring it about. To aid this work, I firmly believe that two Elders could be stationed with advantage in Cleveland, who would devote the whole of their time to tract distributing and house to house visiting. The state of the people needs it. The District is flooded with tracts against us in every part, and we are not able to give the time and information that are required to cope with the influences against us.

Yours faithfully,

R. R. Hodgson.

Leicester, June 30, 1885.

President D. H. Wells.

Dear Brother,—Thinking you would like to hear from me, I take pleasure in penning you a few lines, to let you know how I am proceeding in the ministry.

Some time last winter I received some letters of introduction from Sister Sarah Martin, of Ogden, a near neighbor of mine, to several relatives of her husband's, living in Counties Down and Antrim, Ireland. She desired me to call and preach the Gospel to them, and in due time I visited two families living in Co. Down. They received me kindly, and talked much about their relatives in Utah, the country and people in general, and also upon the Gospel, in which they manifested a spirit of interest. I stayed three days with them, and, before leaving, supplied them well with tracts bearing upon the Gospel, which I told them to read and compare with the Scripture, and that I would call upon them again.

In the course of time I again appeared in their midst, and this time, like the first, they received me cordially, and introduced me to several other farmers and families with whom I obtained favor. I got them together two or three times, and preached to them the principles of the Gospel as taught by the Savior and His Apostles; also the apostasy, and restoration of the Gospel. I supplied them with tracts, and visited from house to house, and explained many chapters in the Bible which had a bearing upon the great latter-day work and kingdom. They seemed to receive it, and each family treated me kindly, and gave me food to eat. I visited the minister's house, gave him some tracts, attended one of his meetings, received an introduction to him, had a conversation with him, and he bade me God speed, and on the whole I began to think I was going to raise a big harvest. I left them all feeling well toward me and the message I bore to them, and promised to call or send some one again.

I met some of them in Belfast, and introduced Elder Sloan to them, and in the course of time he and Elder McMurrin paid them a visit. But alas! like the parable of the sower, the enemy had been and sowed tares or planted the seed of opposition

They treated the Elders with coolness and indifference, and hinted to them that their room was preferable to their company, and rejected the message with contempt, for which they will have to render an account to the great Judge of all in the last day.

A few days after I left Ireland to pursue my labors in England, and commenced laboring in the District where some of my relatives resided, and was soon blessed with the privilege of baptizing four of my cousins into the Church and kingdom of God.

I received another letter from Sister Martin to a cousin and family of her's, Mrs. E. Rushton (widow) and three daughters, living at Stone, Staffordshire. I also had an uncle and aunt living at Smallrise, same County, four miles from Stone. So in the course of time I went to see them, to try and hunt up some records of my forefathers. I spent a week with my uncle and aunt—they had no family—and they made me as welcome as the day was long, and treated me to the best of everything they had. I preached the Gospel to them, but could not get them to accept it. My aunt would have been baptised if her husband consented, but he seemed to care little or nothing about the Gospel. However, I left them without a reasonable excuse.

Mrs. Rushton and family received me quite friendly. I was with them two days, and lost no time in laying before them the restoration of the Gospel and its principles. They were much taken up with it, and acknowledged its truthfulness, and accepted several tracts, and promised to investigate it. I have been keeping up a correspondence with them on the Gospel since my visit, and have great hopes of their yielding obedience to the great message of salvation.

I had access to a number of parish church records, and got the ministers to help me to look them over, and obtained about sixty names of my ancestors, which gave me much joy and satisfaction. The curiosity of the clergy was aroused to the highest degree at my wanting the names, births, and deaths of all these persons. So after I got through, I sat down and told them what I wanted them for, and preached to them the glad tidings of the restoration of the Gospel, touching hard upon the principle of baptism for the living, and then showed the necessity of the dead being baptized for. I bore my testimony to Joseph Smith being a Prophet, and the mission of Elijah the Prophet to him to fulfill the Scriptures. They looked astonished and then amused, and had nothing to say, only that they were satisfied with the good old Church of England. I left Nos. 1 and 2 of Elder John Morgan's tracts with them, and told them to read and ponder over them, and they would give much light on the great latter-day work. They promised to do so.

I went to Wolverhampton, sixteen miles, and found more of my ancestry, and visited my uncle and baptized him into the fold of the Good Shepherd, which filled me with joy and rejoicing; and to God be the praise, the honor, and the glory, both now and forever and ever.

With kind love to all at "42," I am your happy co-worker in the cause of truth,

FRANCIS GREENWELL.

UTAH NEWS.

(Summarized from Territorial Papers.)

Excursions are the order of the day with Salt Lakers.

The thermometer reached eighty-nine degrees in the shade in Salt Lake City, on the afternoon of June 18th.

Mr. William Wood, of Salt Lake City, has made the fastest time on a bicycle of any rider west of the Mississippi River.

The "Norwich Conference" people had a very pleasant time at Fuller's Hill on the occasion of their reunion on the 15th of June.

Preparations were being made in Ogden for a grand celebration of Independence day. Judge Powers was selected to be orator of the day.

On the 9th of June, three men, named J. B. Hunt, of Salmon Falls; N. P. Jeppesen, of Logan, and a Mr. Haynes, were in a boat on Snake River, when their oar or paddle broke, and they were swept over the falls before they could work their way to shore. All three were drowned.

The caterpillars recently gathered in such numbers on the Crescent tramway, in Park City, that several of the cars jumped the track, as the mashed worms made the rails so slippery that the brakes were of no service. Brooms are now placed in front of the wheels, to keep the track free from the pest.

In reference to the question of storing grain in Utah for future exigencies, it is stated that if all the surplus wheat that is now raised there should be saved, it will require three years to lay by one year's bread. The prospective crop of wheat in Utah this season is set at 1,500,000 bushels.

The recent heavy rainstorm in Utah was not entirely beneficial. Lucern and fall wheat were badly prostrated and will be difficult to harvest. Flocks of sheep which had just been sheared, suffered considerably and many died, and the smaller streams resulting from the storm overflowed low lands and roads.

On the afternoon of June 15th, a little son of some tenants living in Mr. Joseph Dean's house, in the Nineteenth Ward of Salt Lake City, was playing in a barn, belonging to that gentleman. He had some matches, and striking a light, the barn caught fire and was burned down. Loss about $800 and no insurance.

About noon on Sunday, June 14th, Dwight B. Harding, a young man about nineteen years of age, who resides at Willard, Box Elder County, was thrown from his horse while riding near the Hot Springs. The horse fell on him and crushed his skull. The injury is very serious, but hopes are entertained of his recovery.

June 23rd was set as the day for the "Annual Excursion for the Old Folks" of Salt Lake County. The following invitation was issued by the Committee: "We invite all who are seventy years old and upward, no matter what their religion, politics, nationality or color may be, to participate with us in a day's enjoyment."

A little son of Bishop Joseph C. Hamilton, of Mill Creek, was accidentally drowned on the morning of the 18th ult. He was only a year and a half old, and while playing with a little sister by the side of a ditch, running near the house, fell in and was carried by the swift current a distance of 150 yards, before his dead body was found by his mother.

The correspondent of the *Deseret News* mentions a movement that was recently made in Provo to clear the city of worms. Through the influence of the ecclesiastical authorities, each family were required to eradicate the worms from their orchard, and Provo now looks green and thrifty, with a splendid promise of rich fruit properly and naturally ripened.